Increase in Drug Production

*382. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been made by Government to know how far the New Drug Policy and the Drug Price Control Order have been effective in increasing the drug production and in the availability of life saving drugs at reasonable prices besides restraining the drug manufacturing companies in reckless profiteering;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the deficiency, if any, identified in the implementation of the New Drug Policy and the Price Control Order; and

(c) the steps contemplated by Govenment in this-regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): (a) to (c) Effectiveness of Policy inputs as provided through announcements on Drug Policy and of Drug (Prices Control) Order from time to time is evident from the fact that the country is today in a position to meet about 70% of its requirements of bulk drugs and almost all its requirements of formulations. There have been no reports of any persistant shortages except for sonic particular branded products for which therapeutic equivalents are normally available. Through experience gained over the years, drug policy has been evolved taking into consideration changes in Industrial Policy, Import Policy and Fiscal Policy and Policy currently followed has been brought in consonance with these changes through "Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986" announced in September, 1994 followed by Drugs (Prices Control) Order announced as recently as January, 1995.

Educational Satellite Channel

*383. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to launch a round-the-clock educational satellite TV Channel with focus on adult literacy and elementary education programmes;

(b) if so, whether Government have set up a committee to work out its modalities and identify the transponder for the said channel; and

(c) if so, by when this new channel will come into force?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The Government considers that the possibilities of operationalising an Educational TV Channel should be seriously explored. A formal Committee under the Department of Education and an informal group formed by Doordarshan are looking into various operational aspects of this proposal. The recommendations of the group arc eagerly awaited. No specific time-frame regarding the coming into force of this new Channel can be indicated at this stage.

Seminar on Culture

*384. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a three-day Seminar on 'Culture' was organised by Government in New Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether extensive debate over the Assamese ethos took place in the Seminar;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether some objectives have been achieved from this Seminar; and